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ABSTRACT

This book presents a comprehensive survey and analysis of the concept of self-direction in learning. Part 1 (Chapters 1-3) distinguishes uses and meanings of the term self-direction and provides an historical introduction. Part 2 (Chapters 4-7) contains a more careful analysis of the four principal domains of self-direction: personal autonomy, willingness and ability to manage one's overall learning endeavors, independent pursuit of learning without formal institutional support or affiliation, and learner-control of instruction. Part 3 (Chapters 8-10) reformulates and refracts ideas and concepts traditionally associated with self-direction so that proposals and recommendations made later can be seen as a coherent new way of thinking about and promoting the development of self-direction in learning. Part 4 (Chapters 11-13) examines ways of increasing learners' self-directedness in a variety of contexts and discusses three areas of prerequisite achievement: broad self-management competencies, sufficient familiarity with the subject matter, and attainment of a sense of learning competence. Part 5 (Chapters 14-15) draws together the main arguments and offers a three-part model of ways in which adult educators can enhance people's self-directedness. It examines major approaches that have been influential in the study of self-direction and proposes research topics in and approaches to studying self-direction from an interpretive point of view. Appendixes include a profile of the autonomous learner, a list of competencies with authors, 945 references, and name and subject indexes. (YLB)

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